

# Russia Between West and East

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**Center for  
Strategic  
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Report Documentation Page				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
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1. REPORT DATE <b>OCT 2003</b>		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED <b>00-00-2003 to 00-00-2003</b>	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE <b>Russia Between West and East</b>				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) <b>CNA Analysis &amp; Solutions,Center for Naval Analyses ,4825 Mark Center Drive,Alexandria,VA,22311</b>				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT <b>Approved for public release; distribution unlimited</b>					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT  <b>Same as Report (SAR)</b>	18. NUMBER OF PAGES  <b>46</b>	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT <b>unclassified</b>	b. ABSTRACT <b>unclassified</b>	c. THIS PAGE <b>unclassified</b>			

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October 2003



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## Foreword

The CNA Corporation is pleased to circulate this thoughtful and comprehensive analysis of Russia and the West by Dr. Mikhail Nosov of the Foundation "East-West Bridges" in Moscow. Eminent Russian scholars in the field of international affairs and representatives of business circles established the Foundation for the development of international cooperation in May 2002. The founders are the Institute of European Studies and the Institute of U.S. and Canada Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, along with the support from members of the business community of Moscow, namely the "Sibir Energy" and "S&T Handels GmbH" companies.

Russians agonize more about their relations with the West and about their own identity than we in "the West" do about whether Russia somehow belongs in the West. After all, Russia never had a nation-state of its own until the collapse of the Soviet Union, and has now had only 12 years to sort out an economy and a political system, while being bogged down in Chechnya. Dr. Nosov provides a concise summary of the pressures that Russia has faced from the east and the south, while reaching out toward Europe—which was in large part "the West" until the post-World War II period and the Cold War. Yet he does not address the two great military incursions from Europe, that of Napoleon in the early 19th century and Nazi Germany in the 20th.

In a way, the concept of "the West" did not emerge for Europe and the United States until the Cold War, when "the East" had really become what we called then the Communist Bloc, supplanting what Europe and the U.S. used to call "the Orient" and Asia (and Asia back then began at Asia Minor, that is, Turkey). During the Cold War, the West itself did not scruple to restrict its membership—Japan and South Korea became partners in what eventually was recognized as "globalization." With the end of the Soviet Union, Russia has been welcomed into the globalizing system of nations, though its membership in the specific institutions of that system have come only haltingly as Russia

groped its way into nationhood, tried to find a functioning economic system, and all the other countries went about their established business.

Yet for those of us who grew up with a Soviet Union whose relations with the West and with the world seemed dominated by a military cast, the emergence of Russia and Russians has been both a delight and a discovery. We had long enjoyed Russian culture, albeit in translation, and we could now enjoy our associations with the people themselves. But it has not been easy for the Russians themselves, as this paper reveals. They must debate the issue of their relationship with the West mostly among themselves.

The CNA Corporation has enjoyed a relationship with Dr. Nosov and his colleagues for around ten years. Dr. Nosov is himself expert in the Far East and has written extensively on Russia's economic situation in its own Far East and its evolving relations with the countries of the area. He has written on broad strategic matters as well. This paper demonstrates the strategic scope of his thinking. While we need not immerse ourselves here on the American side with many of the agonies of historical evolution in and of Russia, this paper helps us to appreciate all the struggles Russia and Russians have been through. They emerged from their Soviet experience, though, with an industrial, urban, educated, media-rich society that now adds cell-phones, internet cafes, and coffee bars. This looks very much Western, but still leaves open the question of whether the economy can keep up and a participatory polity (which we may call democracy) can develop over time. As these processes unfold, the question of East vs. West may well become moot for both Russia's ordinary citizens and its politicians because they will have then become part of the globalized world.

—H. H. Gaffney

# Introduction

Russia's foreign policy today seems to have passed a certain crossroads. After September 11, 2001, President Vladimir Putin sharply swerved the helm of our diplomacy westwards. This, in turn, triggered enthusiastic response as well as sharp criticism within Russia. In the main, the discussions focused on questions concerning the rationality of the “pro-western” course, its duration and an alternative alliance or union with the West. This paper aims to analyze the causes and consequences stemming from the given choice. It may be taken as an attempt to examine the problems both at the level of the ongoing theoretical debates between present-day “Westernizers” and “Slavophiles,” as well as from the point of view of “policy in practice,” all the more so since the President's definite choice is still subject to change. The August 2002 decision to conclude an economic agreement with Iraq and President Putin's meeting with North Korean President Kim Jong Il in Vladivostok in the same year seem to indicate that there still are forces in the Kremlin ready to orient Russia's foreign policy towards regimes that cannot, even by a long shot, be regarded as democratic.

## Background

In the history of Russia, there is actually nothing new in Russia's choice between the West and other options for political orientation. Essentially, the dispute that started and which is continuing to this day focuses on the following: those that believe that Russia must become a part of Western civilization vs. those that advocate the concepts of peculiar Russian or Eurasian civilization.

Some in Russia idealize the West, while others are convinced of “the unique” Russian national character and superiority of Slavs over the people of the West, repeating the postulates of those who supported this idea in the 19th and 20th centuries.<sup>1</sup> The history and geography of the country lying between Europe and Asia, Russia's leadership in



the family of Slavic peoples and, finally, the more than 70 years of Russia's hegemony in the Soviet domain give rise to the question of a possible "non-Western" orientation of Russia's policy. It would be proper to add to this the protracted years of confrontation between the USSR and the West, which could not but affect the anti-Western mentality of several generations of Russians.

Unfortunately, as has so often been the case in Russia's history, the possibility of a multi-vector policy is not something that we can talk about. Essentially, this is a question that can't be compromised: either Russia goes Westward or Eastward, in which case the latter almost most certainly implies a confrontation with the West. Moreover, if the orientation of the supporters of the "pro-Western" course seems to be more than obvious—these are the countries of Western democracy—then their opponents in Russia's potential allies include the so-called "rogue" states, call for the restoration of the never-existent Pan-Slavic unity and the formation of an alliance based on the CIS, a close union with China and even with the Muslim world.

Regretfully, the revival of the traditional Russian theoretical confrontation between so-called Westernizers and "Slavophiles" very often impedes policy pragmatism, which must take into account not only the specifics of Russia's position between West and East, but also the impact of theoretical discussions on the realities of Russia's internal political situation. To be sure, it would be folly to try to understand Russia's present-day choice and the struggle that has evolved around it, bypassing the historical context of Russia's relations with the West and the East, without making an attempt to understand the history of the formation of these mutual stereotypes.

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1. As Ivan Aksakov wrote in 1863, "The ordinary Russian people are smarter and more gifted than the ordinary people of all the countries of Europe." I.S. Aksakov, "Othchego besoludiye in Russia," ("Why the decline in Russia's population"), *Collected Works*, Vol. 2 (Moscow, 1886), p. 156.

## Russia and The West: The Historical Context

From the civilizational point of view, the arbitrary division of the world into the West and the East came into being historically, since, with the exception of Africa and the aboriginal civilizations in America and Australia, the roots of practically all the cultures of the contemporary world lie in Europe or Asia, whose frontiers are more cultural than geographical. Since the time of antiquity, this division has existed between the Hellenic-Roman culture and the Persian Orient. In view of its history and geographical position, Russia found itself at the intersection of two gigantic civilizations, although by its language and its genotype, the Slavs, who the majority of the country consists of, are related to the European family of peoples.

The history of Russia's entry into the West is complicated, contradictory and, so far, quite a long distance from its completion. The adoption of Christianity by Kievan Rus was the decisive step in Russia's association with European civilization. In the 9th century, when Europe began to acquire statehood, similar processes were evident in the Slavic part of the continent. The peoples inhabiting the present-day territory of Russia lived in close contact with the Asian tribes in the East, as well as with the peoples of Europe in the West. Up until the first quarter of the 13th century, the development of Rus proceeded within the framework of frequent wars and clashes with neighbors in the West, East and the South. The wars alternated with periods of peace, which incidentally was typical for the entire domain of Europe.

In the meantime, the Kievan princes and ruling houses were busy forming marital unions: Norway's Harald I was married to Elizabeth, daughter of Prince Yaroslav; Hungarian King Andrew was married to Anastasia Yaroslavnya, and France's King Henri I to Anna Yaroslavna. Kievan Rus was part of the common European cultural domain, if one proceeds from the premise that such a domain had crystallized by that time. Nonetheless, Rus maintained intensive ties with its Asian

neighbors – Russian princes quite often married half-breeds. Then the Tatar-Mongol onslaught on Rus substantially retarded the process of Russia's self-identification and intensified the Asian features of Russian mentality.

China, India, and even Islam in its canonic forms should not regard the East's impact on Rus during the two centuries of Tatar-Mongol domination as a kind of cultural influence. The Tatar-Mongol onslaught on Rus began at the end of the 30s in the 13th century, while the Golden Horde accepted Islam only in 1261. Prior to that, Genghis Khan and his descendants were quite indifferent to religion. The Tatar-Mongol yoke was quite tolerant to Christianity and paganism. However, it had a tremendous impact from the point of view of wrecking the country's economic and state structure. It was precisely during that period that the traditional ties between Rus and Europe were ruptured for fear of the further penetration of the Asian hordes into the depth of the continent. In essence, it may be said that Russia became a sanitary corridor between Europe and the East.

The onslaught of the Golden Horde on Rus and Europe was an important, but by far not the only, reason for a sharp curtailment of ties between Rus and Europe. The end of the Tatar-Mongol yoke and the downfall of Constantinople coincided in the timeframe. The process of strengthening the Muscovy principality called for a new national idea. Moscow proclaimed itself the heir of the Byzantine Empire—"The Third Rome"—the custodian of true Orthodoxy, the fighter against "Latiums"—the Catholic and Protestant churches. Moreover, after the downfall of Constantinople, the essential culture of Byzantium migrated, in the main, westwards, whereas Russia obtained, first of all, a dominating influence from Asia, which supplemented the Oriental component of the lifestyle and political culture that Russia had already received as a result of the Tatar-Mongol onslaught.

The interaction that Russia had experienced with European culture prior to the 13th century came to a standstill, whereas the scattered Russian princedoms came under the tremendous impact of the "steppes." It was precisely during these almost two centuries of the Tatar onslaught that Europe forged ahead of Russia in its develop-

ment. And it was precisely this that gave rise to our (Russia's) inferiority complex in respect to our Western neighbors, which it has still not been able to overcome. Because of this, we often regard them with mixed feelings of envy and haughtiness.

It was due to such feelings that, together with Western Christianity, we rejected such principles of a civilized social structure as freedom of personality, individualism and democracy. Instead, these niches were filled by despotism, absolutism, harsh rules bridling society and total denial of any human rights - all of which had come from the East. Rus inherited all of that both from Byzantium and from the Golden Horde.

Since the downfall of Constantinople, the West was perceived in Russia in a twofold manner: on the one hand, the Russians, in their majority, regarded themselves as Europeans, whereas, on the other hand, Russia has never been really perceived either by us, or by Europeans, to this day, as an organic part of the West. We feel that we are part of Europe, but at the same time, we understand that our country will not, for a long time to come, be considered as an inseparable part of European civilization.

Moreover, it was already back in the 15th century that the West regarded us as a hostile force. Rus considered itself the heir of Byzantium, which had always been the foe of "heretic Europe." We still remember the military pressure that the West constantly imposed on Rus. A rapprochement was impeded also by the feeling that Moscow was lagging far behind Western Europe, which during the fight of Rus against the Tatar-Mongol onslaught, was able to move far ahead in economic, technical, and cultural aspects.

The cautious movement towards returning to the European cultural-political domain had already begun during the reign of tsar Ivan the Terrible. It continued during the rule of tsar Alexei Mikhailovich. It acquired its extreme form under the rule of his son Peter the Great.<sup>2</sup> It is practically continuing to this day. If one speaks about how we are perceived in the West, then the people there always appreciated and still do appreciate Russia's contribution to European and world culture; those in the West understand that ethnic Russians are Europeans, but they still continue to regard us with a certain degree of

alienation. As Slavophile A. Homyakov remarked in the middle of the 19th century, the West's feelings towards Russia are "a mixture of fear and hatred that were instilled by our own substantial might, with disrespect that was instilled by our own disrespect for ourselves."<sup>3</sup> To a certain extent, the West's attitude towards Russia remains within the framework of that definition even today. President Vladimir Putin's slogan concerning the need to build a society based on principles of democracy and a market economy in Russia can be viewed in essence as acknowledgement of the obvious fact that we are once again beginning to move in the direction of the West since both democracy and a market economy are obvious products of Western civilization.

The problem of relations with the West that is again standing before Russia today is not unique. Japan faced a similar question at the beginning of the 19th century when, in the period of the Meiji Restoration, there was a struggle between those who supported mastering of Western science and engineering and those who urged Russia "to drive out the barbarians," that is, Americans and Europeans. China, Turkey and many other countries also were unable to avoid the struggle against Western influence. Essentially, it was always a clash between those who were intent on overcoming the lag in engineering, in reforming the political system, in education and other spheres of life by expanding ties with Europe and the U.S., and those who advocated the preservation of the existing order. The populist slogans calling for the preservation and idealization of national lifestyle were both a reflection of their helplessness in the face of the might of the colonialists and their humiliation by their realization of lagging behind the major powers. It was also an instrument for conserving the existing political form of authority.

Such a conflict could acquire various forms. At times, it was an armed struggle - the Japanese campaign against England, France, the U.S.,

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2. Writing about the reign of Peter the Great, Alexander Herzen remarked, "They gave us science and education at the end of the whip." A. Herzen, Letter to C. Ribeirrol, 7 February 1854, *Collected Works* (Moscow, 1955), Vol. 5, p. 223.
  3. A.S. Homyakov. "The Opinion of Russians about Foreigners," *Works*, Fourth Edition, Vol. 1 (Moscow, 1914), p. 32.

and Holland in 1863-1864, the civil war between those who advocated opening the country and those who called for preserving isolation, the rebellions in China at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, the current clash between Islamists and secularists in Algeria and Egypt. In the 19th century in Russia, that struggle acquired the form of a discussion between Westernizers and “Slavophiles,” which incidentally never grew into an armed clash. This was due, first of all, to the cultural closeness of Russia and Europe and a common cultural heritage that breeds rivals.

During the existence of the USSR, the internal struggle against Western influence acquired a sharply expressed ideological form. The dividing line between the USSR and the West began to pass between communism and capitalism, and it was this that pushed far into the background any discussion about the USSR's continental affiliation. For the Kremlin, the world was distinctly divided into “three worlds”— the worlds of socialism, capitalism, and the so-called “third world,” the latter consisting of those countries that were struggling against colonialism and had not yet finally entered the socialist camp. At the same time, Russian emigration in the 1920s became the center of a new Eurasianism. That movement was characterized, on the one hand, by an obvious anti-Western stance, and on the other hand, by placing the emphasis on the East's impact on the history of Russia.<sup>4</sup>

The Westernizers advocated Russia's integration into the world of the West, whereas the Slavophiles and Eurasians always considered that Russia should proceed along its own road of development, and were notorious for their strong non-acceptance of European principles of

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4. Eurasians were united by their quest for to developing the world and Russia by creating “a new Russian ideology”—revival of Russian civilization on the basis of a cultural unification of the peoples in the Eurasian space as an antithesis to Europeanization. Eurasianism was opposed to the political forms and culture of the Romano-German West, including the culture that existed in Russia prior to 1917. It was precisely the new Russian culture, in their opinion, that was to become the motive force of world development. The movement lasted until 1937. See, for example, Nikolai Trubetskoy, *We and Others*, 1925. Quoted by I.B. Orlov, *European Civilization* (Moscow: Norma, 1998), pp. 250-251.

spiritual, social, and even economic development, setting them off against the Slavic and Eastern origin of the spiritual development of the country.<sup>5</sup> Unfortunately, the specifics of Russian philosophical thinking, as a rule, were distinguished, and are distinguished to this day, by a certain conceptual extremism - one always excludes the other. Such a contrast always leads to a polarization of opinions, although each of these vectors in political thinking contains, within itself, rational principles and has an objective historical explanation.

The struggle between Westernizers and Slavophiles was essentially a reflection of Peter the First's dichotomy - his love-hatred towards Russia. Although he doubtlessly loved Russia, Peter "the Great" humiliated it by artificial Germanization, trying to bring it up to his (frequently distorted) level of understanding of European life. And it was this that created a long-term (existing even to this day) Russian inferiority complex in respect to the West. The Russian elite tried to imitate the West, but at the same time, was not over-fond of it and never trusted it to the end. Condemning Europe for its materialism and lack of spirituality, they pleasurably made use of the fruits of Western civilization.<sup>6</sup> At the level of the population, this non-acceptance of the West was generated, first of all, by their dislike of their bosses - Westernizers, with whom the peasantry, and then workers, found themselves more often than not in permanent social conflict.

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5. Pointing out that the views of Slavophiles were based on the thesis concerning the indissolubility of the Russian political system with the Russian nationality and primordial people's spirit, which, in turn, predetermined the unchanging political structure in the country, Pavel Milyukov wrote in 1905 that, "Even now (they) did not manage to protect the primordial origins from the demands of life," while "the old dreams about 'the people's spirit' have now become totally obsolete." P. Milyukov, "Primordial Origins" and "the Demands of Life" in "The Russian State Structure," Speech on the Don, Rostov-on-the-Don, 1905, p. 23.

6. In a letter to his wife, one of the ideologists of the Slavophiles, poet Fyodor Tyutchev, wrote: "It was not without sadness that I parted with that rotten West, so clean and full of conveniences, in order to return to my beloved homeland that promises such much filth in the future."

The Russian Orthodox Church, which was never distinguished by special ecumenism, also exerted a serious anti-Western influence. Although it was within the framework of consolidating Russian statehood, we can also talk about Russia protecting Orthodoxy from the influence of Catholicism and Protestantism. This could not but have an impact on the political, economic and cultural ties between Russia and Europe.

Throughout the 16th and 17th centuries, Russia's ties with Europe were minimal. It would be folly to suggest that the absence of these ties favorably influenced the development of the country. Living through the Renaissance and major geographical discoveries, Europe was eyed by Russia with enmity and alienation. For Europe, Russia remained on the periphery, an exotic and faraway country whose customs were not so well understood in Europe.

In the 19th century, the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the Europeanists of Peter the First's times began to raise rhetorical questions concerning Russia's belonging to Europe. The range of answers to that eternal question was quite broad. Alexander Pushkin quite categorically considered that "Russia never did have anything in common with the rest of Europe."<sup>7</sup> His contemporary, Pyotr Chaadayev, maintained that although "we live in Eastern Europe—that is true, but nonetheless, we never belonged to the East."<sup>8</sup> Later, that dispute developed into a bitter struggle between Westernizers and Slavophiles.

On the one hand, there was the realization of a profound gap with Europe and the understanding of one's own lagging behind, while on the other hand, the ruling elite tried its best to imitate the West in everything, and quite often blindly copied it. This undermined national self-identification and led to frustration. "By rooting out ancient habits, portraying them as silly, by praising and introducing

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7. A.S. Pushkin, Second volume of History of the Russian People, by N. Polevoy, draft of article, *Collected Works Vol. 6* (Moscow, 1981), p. 99.

8. Chaadayev, "Apologia of a Madman (1836-1837)," *Selected Works and Letters* (Moscow, 1991), p. 155.



foreign habits, the ruler of Russia humiliated the Russians in their own hearts. Does contempt for oneself incline a man and a citizen to accomplish great deeds?” asked the eminent Russian historian, Nikolai Karamzin.<sup>9</sup> Although these words refer to Peter the First's reforms, our current exaggerations in blindly copying not even the best achievements of the West gives us to the right to repeat those words. Regretfully, our relations with the West so far are unable to surmount the barrier between borrowing what is useful and worthless copying.

An example of “aping” the West can be seen in the many economic transformations attempted by “the young reformers” in the early 1990s. Quite often, their approaches to reforms smacked of Peter the First's desire to wreck the old in any possible way and at any price, and to implant Western models, many of which categorically did not fit in and do not fit in with the conditions in this country.

The Soviet period of history contributed substantially to our estrangement from the West. First of all, the West was the embodiment of all that bourgeois fabric of capitalism, colonialism, and “oppression of man by man” that the Bolsheviks opposed at the doctrinal and factual level. Another obstacle that impeded Russia's movement in the direction of the West was “the Iron Curtain” that separated our country from the rest of the world for many decades. Moreover, in Soviet times, just as in Russia during the 19th century, our attitude towards the West was built on the contradictions between the arrogance of the feeling of our own superiority over rotting Europe and the U.S., the messianic desire to making the communist teaching “the only true one,” and the internal understanding of the need to catch up to it in many parameters.

The official doctrine of Soviet foreign policy was “proletarian internationalism”—in other words, both supporting all those forces that opposed the West, while preaching “peaceful coexistence,” i.e., cooperating with the West. These were doctrinal reflections of internal conflict. Official (Soviet) propaganda energetically and systematically

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9. N. Karamzin, *Notes about Ancient and New Russia in Its Political and Civil Aspects* (Moscow, 1991), p. 32

accused capitalism of committing real and imaginary sins, while the fruits of diplomatic efforts became periods of not too stable “detente” in relations between the USSR and the West.

Both in pre-revolutionary Russia and in the USSR, the attitude towards foreigners was always of a twofold nature. The Russians were ready to learn from the West and to invite scientists and specialists, many of whom remained in the country and became part of Russian culture. At the same time, there was a sufficiently understandable tendency to prove to ourselves that we were just as good as the West. For this purpose, a Russian handicraftsman “shoed a flea,” or we stubbornly upheld the existing, and more often non-existing, primacy of Russian science. For example, according to the Soviet history of science, the radio was invented by Popov, not Marconi, the first to take a plane airborne was engineer Mozhaisky, not the Wright brothers, etc.<sup>10</sup>

Both before 1917 and after 1991, Russia was always a country that was “catching up.” That is how history panned out, and this is nothing to be offended about. In one century, Japan traversed the road from a feudal country to one that now boasts the second largest economic potential in the world. For us, this competition has dragged out for centuries, and today our goal is catching up to little Portugal rather than the powerful United States. In Soviet times, the people were lulled by the myth of the USSR's grandeur, while pride for the victory in the Great Patriotic War (World War II), for our achievements in outer space, and for the nuclear missile competition with the U.S. eclipsed our understanding of the price that was paid for all that, including our lagging behind the West in level and quality of lifestyle, about which lag the majority of our people living behind the “Iron Curtain” did not even suspect.

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10. A popular joke among the intelligentsia in the 1950s was that “Russia was the birthplace of elephants.”



## Problems of Choosing between West and East

The theoretical dispute concerning the possibility of choosing between East and West is important for forming a paradigm for developing the country or “national idea” that is needed, even though it was vulgarized by Yeltsin's contests to find such an idea. Moreover, the practical significance of this quest is connected, as we see it, with one of the most important factors of the country's economic development, namely the motivation of labor. It is possible and necessary to talk about the role of the state in the functioning of the economy, about investments, about reforming the banking system, and about many other elements of economic management mechanisms without which the economy is unable to function normally.

All those factors can influence the basic economy, but the employee, in view of these or those reasons, needs clear-cut stimuli to perform his job well. On the one hand, the more than 70 years of Soviet rule wrecked the Christian code of labor ethics that had begun to crystallize in Russia, while on the other hand, this rule fostered a “GULAG-like” attitude towards labor. The principle that “we are pretending that we are working and the state is pretending it is paying us” was quite often the determining factor shaping the people's attitude towards labor in the Soviet Union. The state's paternalism in ensuring a minimal subsistence wage “killed” in many the stimuli to work intensively.

In the early years of the Soviet Union, the enthusiasm of the builders of “the new society” doubtlessly did exist and this ensured many of the USSR's achievements in industrialization. However, all the incredible efforts of the population were not adequately reflected in the raising of their standard of living. The formula “labor is exploitation” replaced a normal attitude towards one's job. Labor motivation was determined either by propaganda campaigns or by repressive actions on the part of the CPSU party-state apparatus.

The USSR's achievements in building the military and its related successes in space exploration were not the result of a rational functioning of the economy, but rather the result of the state's concentration of colossal means and resources in these spheres. Besides the military-industrial sector, the only branch of the economy that functioned more or less efficiently was science. What we are talking about here is an obvious coincidence of objectives confronting the military-industrial sector, whose work would be meaningless without regular scientific feedback, colossal material and financial expenditures, and the natural requirements of a scientist "to satisfy his own curiosity," in the given case, at the expense of the state.

In all probability, there is a grain of truth also in Nikolai Berdayev's reasoning about "the Russian soul being under the sway of wide expanses," and that, if "a German feels that Germany will not save him, then he himself must save Germany," whereas "a Russian does not think that he will save Russia, but rather that Russia will save him." The Russian consoles himself in that "behind him there are still unbounded expanses and that will save him, that he is not very frightened, and because of that he is not very eager to overstrain himself."<sup>11</sup> However, until we come to realize that the salvation of Russia can be achieved exclusively through our labor and our efforts, and until Western, or if you wish, Confucian labor ethic standards become a norm adapted to Russian conditions, it will be impossible to build a new Russia.

The need to work hard work each and every day should, by no means, conflict between "Western materialism" and "Russian spirituality," since one cannot speak about the spirituality of a society that has thus far been unable to meet the elementary requirements of its citizens. If one speaks about countries that in practice have proven their economic viability, then their code of labor ethics was based either on strongly rooted Christian postulates or on Confucian ethics. What developed countries of West and the East had in common was that their economies functioned on the basis of market relations. Both in Europe and America, as well as in the countries of the Confucian

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11. Nikolai Berdayev, *Russia's Destiny* (1915), (Moscow, 1990), p. 68.

area, the ties between religion and way of life, including attitudes towards labor, were never ruptured. In Russia, more than 70 years of state atheism seriously infringed upon the ties between religious dogmas and ways of life, and what is more, the Russian Orthodox Church, regrettably, rarely devoted serious attention to questions concerning labor ethics. The Orthodox tradition towards the way of life is, in large measure, connected with the primacy of salvation of the soul over the creation of material benefits on Earth. The current beginning of the revival of religion in Russia is so far, in the main, connected with rites rather than implanting Christian morals.

From that point of view, for us the inculcation of Western principles in respect to labor is extremely important in order to promote the normal functioning of Russia's economy. Here, we are not talking about the acceptance of Protestant labor ethics as a religious dogma—for that would be at variance with Orthodox traditions—but rather about seeking ways to intensify labor motivation in Russia. The more than ten years in which Russia lived in a quasi-market system have intensified the influence of the material factor on labor productivity. However, they have also demonstrated that money alone cannot stimulate its growth. The shaping of effective principles of labor motivation will require the use of the experience of both Protestant and Confucian labor ethics at the practical level. Moreover, due to many reasons, for Russia, the adoption of European and American experience in management and business legislation in respect to the local conditions is more accessible to us than using Asian achievements in the functioning of an economy.

One of the most important and obligatory conditions for our emergence from the crisis is to build a civil society, which, in its turn, along with other conditions, is possible only when a person respects others, but first of all, respects himself.

It was back in 1836, when the concept of “being civilized” was identified with European culture, that Nikolai Nadezhdin wrote in the journal “Telescope” that “if we really want to be Europeans, to look like them not only in clothes and in outward appearance, then we must begin by learning from them, how to respect ourselves.”<sup>12</sup> The absence of respect for the individual, including ourselves, befell Rus-

sia's lot from that same East that it encountered in Byzantium and the Golden Horde. As was sadly noted in 1866 by Russia's Minister of the Interior, Count Pyotr Valuyev, who was well acquainted with the situation in the country, "respect for liberty of conscience, for personal liberty, for the right of property ownership, to feeling of decency is absolutely alien to us." For him, the Western and Eastern origins in the behavior of Russians were defined as "a mixture of Tohtamysh (Khan of the Golden Horde) and Duke Alba."<sup>13</sup>

Among the people who are sincere and profound believers, there is a conviction that Russia should not accept Western values, many of which are directly connected with Catholicism and Protestantism. Besides purely confessional prejudices, they hold that the Western desire for material well-being is alien to the Russian people, whose deep-rooted spiritual requirement, according to Fyodor Dostoyevsky, "is the requirement of suffering, an eternal and insatiable suffering everywhere and in everything."<sup>14</sup>

The problem of "seeking our own road" which Alexander Solzhenitsyn spoke about in his essay, "How are we to fix up Russia," is both complicated and delicate. It seems to be quite apparent that Russia must not, and in fact, cannot copycat the West. On the other hand, such institutions as a civil society, respect of human rights, respect of the right of property ownership, freedom of speech and many others without which it is impossible to build a democratic society, are, to one degree or another, successfully operating in the West. The introduction of democratic institutions must not in any way deprive the inhabitants of Russia of the spirituality and the possibility of seeking self-perfection that the patriots of Russia's "uniqueness" are so worried about. On the contrary, liberty in the absence of a civil society, democracy and law and order often transforms a person into a bribe taker, a thief, and a criminal, and this has been intensified by the decade of new Russia's existence.

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12. *Telescope*, Part XXXI (Moscow, 1836), p. 161.

13. *The Diary of P. Valuyev, Minister of the Interior, 1861-1876*, Vol. 2 (Moscow, 1961), p. 105.

14. F. Dostoyevsky, *A Writer's Diary*, 1873, p. 256.

As long as we are moved, just like Russian philosopher Konstantin Leontiev was moved, by the claim that the Western bourgeois' "promissory note honesty" is alien to us, the legal norms of the civilized world will remain only a sugar-coated declaration for Russia.

As long as we continue to acknowledge condescendingly and with admiration that "the European sense of justice is formal, callous, and equalizing; that the Russian [sense of justice] is formless, kind-hearted, and fair," while "the Russian person has always... valued freedom of spirit above formal legal freedom,"<sup>15</sup> our judicial system will function as it most often functions today—not according to the law, but "according to notions."

Regretfully, present-day Russia too often encounters the syndrome of the absence of respect for itself both at the level of the country as well as at the level of the individual. A judge handing down a guilty verdict to a criminal charged with attempted murder and giving him a 6-year suspended sentence respects neither his own country, its judicial system nor himself.

Doubtlessly, the problem concerning the differences between Russian statehood and statehood in the West does exist, and will for many years to come remain a subject of heated debates between Westernizers, Slavophiles, and new Eurasians. However, the question of our relations with the West and the East today stands in the purely practical plane - shall we continue discussing how we differ from the West and its institutions, differences which doubtlessly exist and cannot but exist in view of many reasons of a historical nature, or shall we try to make use of all the positive things that Western civilization has accumulated? Conditionally speaking, Russia here faces a choice between two basic vectors in diplomacy:

- First, to build a society based on liberal values, which envisages the pursuance of a policy that, to one degree or another, is oriented towards the West.

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15. I. Ilyin, *Against Russia* (1950), *Our Tasks* (Moscow, 1992), p. 59.



Here, we are not talking about creating a rigid system of allied relations with the U.S. and the countries of Western Europe, but more about supporting the main vectors of their policy that, in one way or another, affect Russia's interests or coincide with the latter's interests. This concerns the fight against terrorism, narcotics smuggling, and international crime. The objective of such relations, besides resolving the above-mentioned tasks, is to depart from the customary patterns of confrontation that were seen during the Cold War period and to create an atmosphere of mutual tolerance.

- The alternative to such an approach is “an attempt to create a counterbalance to the West by developing our economic and military might and cooperating with other non-European countries against the West,” while preserving “our primordial national values and institutions,” as sociologist Irina Orlova wrote in her book “The Eurasian Civilization.”<sup>16</sup>

Here, the main emphasis is on the thesis that holds it is impossible to accept the European model of development and that it is necessary to make use of the Eurasian factor of Russia—a country that lies in the center of the Eurasian continent.

A wide range of potential allies of Russia in creating such a new confrontational paradigm has been suggested. In particular, it has been proposed to form a union with those countries that, due to this or that reason, are prepared for a confrontation with the West, and first of all, with the U.S. This option of policy is fraught with the practically total isolation of Russia from the life of the world community where the West predominates, and is seen sooner as an instrument of political *épatage* by intriguers such as Vladimir Zhirinovskiy.

A union or alliance with China on an anti-American basis is not ruled out. This is seen as a counterbalance to the West on the basis of a union of the Slavic peoples and the Asian countries that were once part of the USSR. The main integral aspects of such patterns are their obvious anti-Western orientation and the thesis that holds that Russian mentality and Western values are incompatible. Both the first

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16. I. Orlova, *The Eurasian Civilization* (Moscow: Norma, 1998), p. 10.

and second options of practical politics affect not only the aspects of real diplomacy, but an even broader question of the spiritual orientation of Russians—who are we: Europeans, Asians or the bearers of an original Russian culture that does not fit into the procrustean bed of the customary division of the Eurasian continent into West and East, Asia and Europe?

The most probable and preferable option for developing Russian foreign policy, as we see it, is seen in President Putin's course, which is geared towards active development of Russia's relations with the West, the latter being understood by no means only as a geographical concept. What we are talking about here is the expansion of ties with the most advanced countries of Europe, America and Asia, with the aim of ensuring stable political and economic development of our country.

The collapse of the communist system and the disintegration of the USSR created an ideological vacuum and a movement to democratize the country. The Russian understanding of democracy (even though an internal consensus doubtlessly does exist on the question of whether it is needed for the country) covers a wide range, from anarchy to forms that differ very little from a Pinochet-brand of dictatorship, slightly diluted with liberalism.

But the new Russia is coming ever closer to the realization that the development of a market economy under our conditions and the stabilization of the political situation in the country are possible if the main postulates of Western democracy are adopted. These postulates include respect of human rights and the rights of the property owner, the establishment of the legal foundations of democracy, and the inculcation of generally accepted democratic procedures in day-to-day life (taking into account Russia's national and historical peculiarities). In other words, as communist Party functionaries were fond of saying in Soviet times, adopting Western standards of democracy “on the whole.” Today, other versions of democracy not in name, but in essence, simply do not exist.

The development of relations with the West is also of tremendous economic importance for Russia. The countries of the EU, the U.S., Canada, and Japan, which de facto can be regarded among the coun-

tries of the West, annually take approximately 40% of Russia's exports, provide more than 30% of Russia's imports, and provide over 65% of direct foreign investments. The West is the only creditor of Russia and donor of economic aid. Scientific-technical cooperation with the most advanced countries of the world is of paramount importance. Russia's cooperation with the West plays a significant role in the matter of ensuring our security, even though Soviet, then Russian, military planning was directed, first of all, in a global conflict against the U.S. and NATO that included the use of nuclear arms. The dismantling of these doctrines from the period of the Cold War, even though they don't have much military and economic importance for Russia, is possible only in conditions of amicable and stable relations between Russia and the West.

This does not by any means imply that when it emerges from its crisis, Russia "will turn its back on Europe."<sup>17</sup> The period of ideological confrontation has receded into the past, although it is still necessary to understand the really existing differences between Russia and the West. Lastly, Russia's participation in resolving such global problems facing mankind as terrorism, famine and poverty, and ecological threats is impossible without close interaction with the West, since the West plays the decisive roles in these processes.

The loss of superpower status still painfully affects the Russian people's perception of their own country. Regret concerning the loss of past imperial grandeur remains a breeding-ground for critics of reforms in general and rapprochement with the West in particular, as well as for the emergence of all sorts of fascist-like chauvinists. However, the policy that President Putin has pursued after September 11 has made it substantially possible to shore up Russia's prestige in the world and to regain some of its political stature that were lost after the disintegration of the USSR and the period of almost total absence of power while Yeltsin was in the Kremlin. The absence of confrontations with the U.S. and Western Europe offers the opportunity to strengthen Russia's international status, especially in view of its direct dependence on the stand of the West on this issue.

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17. These words were attributed to Peter the First.

The preservation of the course geared towards further strengthening our relations with the West depends on a number of factors, but first of all, on two most important ones:

- First, on how seriously the West regards Russia as its ally, and to what degree the West will take into account our interests in its policy.
- Second, on how serious is President Putin's course of rapprochement with the West and how long will it last.

Both these factors dovetail closely, and their interaction is determined both by the general understanding of the need and advantages of cooperation, as well as by the still existing mutual mistrust that was formed during the long years of the Cold War.



## Division of Forces

Although at the level of practical diplomacy there are no supporters at present of an obvious swerve of Russian foreign policy from the West to the East, at the level of political debates this question is still on the agenda.

Several generations of Soviet people were brought up in the context of a global confrontation between socialism and capitalism. But for the short interval of the Great Patriotic War (World War II), from 1917 to 1991 the U.S. and Europe were the main enemies of the USSR, and in a number of Soviet agencies, the U.S. was branded none other than “Enemy No. 1.” While anti-Americanism was, first of all, the creature of the state propaganda machine, it nevertheless aroused in many Russians a feeling of estrangement, as the authorities compelled them to conduct campaigns against “cosmopolitanism” and “toadying before the West.”

Anti-Western sentiments are still harbored by those who, in view of various circumstances, outwardly accepted the results of the Soviet Union's defeat in the Cold War, but deep inside, have been unable to reconcile themselves to this. These are representatives of the so-called power structures—the former CPSU apparatus and the military-industrial sector—, many elderly people who were accustomed to viewing America as “the enemy,” and younger people who have been unable to find their niche in the new social system and who are experiencing a kind of swaggering from their anti-American bravado. The bitterness from defeat in the Cold War is still strong among these circles.

But at the same time, such people are alarmed by the present asymmetry: the continuing progress of the West and Russia's lagging behind, the feeling of helplessness, and the irrevocably lost hope for at least “catching up to” America and Europe, and perhaps, even “surpassing” them. Moreover, the experience of the past ten years of exist-

ence in a wild market economy—experience that was not too successful for the majority of people—did not erase the stereotype of a negative perception of the West and, first of all, the leader of the Western world - the United States.

In Russia, where the mentality of a superpower still exists, and where a considerable swath of the population still remembers the times when not a single more or less serious conflict in the world was resolved without the participation of both the U.S. and the USSR, the understanding of the system of international relations in general and bilateral American-Russian relations in particular was determined by an elevated sensitivity to any underestimation of Russia's interests, even when the matter concerned their subjective interpretation. What is more, the distinguishing feature of any more or less politicized Russian citizen whose convictions lay left of center remain in the obviously-expressed anti-American spectrum.

The people's dissatisfaction with their leadership with regard to a wide range of questions makes its policy in respect to the West a favorite target for criticism. For any opposition to the authorities (possibly with the exception of the Union of Right Forces), the criticism leveled at the policy of Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Putin in respect to Washington has long ago become a kind of “trademark.” For such “patriots,” all of Russia's troubles and tribulations emanate from Washington, while the range of invectives from the intellectual level of the accusers covers “the conspiracy of the Harvard boys” to attempts to poison Russians with so-called “Bush-legs” (chicken hind-quarters). The bilateral relations are also complicated by the inert and uncoordinated stands of the Russian bureaucratic agencies that, at times from incompetence and at times intentionally, do not make good use of those possibilities that have emerged in the bilateral relations after September 11, 2001.

The general threat of terrorism has formed the basis for a new round of detente in relations between Russia and the West. However, the fight against terrorism alone cannot become the foundation for a firm alliance. The shaping of a truly mutually advantageous partnership will not be so simple a task; the possibilities and potential of the two sides today are much too different. The situation may change

only when Russia overcomes its systemic crisis, reinstates its economic, political, and military might, and transforms itself into one of the centers of power in the world arena. This will create the potential groundwork for more equitable partnership relations between the United States and Russia and between the West in general and Russia.

The contradictions stemming from Russia's rapprochement with the West are reflected in the balance of forces in the Russian political arena. Very arbitrarily, the Russian political establishment can be divided into several groups. It is possible to include the majority of the "Yabloko" leadership, many of the foremost members of the Union of Right Forces, and a considerable part of Russian political scientists in the group of politicians that have always considered that Russia should have normal and stable relations with the West. As was justly noted by RF State Duma Deputy Speaker Vladimir Lukin, it is necessary to traverse "the road into Europe together, proudly upholding our heads and without elbow pushing." From the point of view of the supporters of such a point of view, which in the main coincides with the stance of President Putin, the construction of a democratic society in Russia and a market society is impossible without stable and constructive relations with the U.S. and Western Europe.

There are among Russian politicians those who are in favor of complete and total orientation towards the West. They advocate unconditional Russian acceptance of all Western political institutions, including the speediest accession of Russia to NATO and the EU. Moreover, quite often their "Western swerve" is the antithesis to Russia's orientation towards the East. They do not know Asia and are afraid of it; they believe that a Russia-China clash is inevitable. Some of these politicians sincerely believe that there is no alternative to total orientation towards the West, while others cynically "fish for" grants from various Western foundations.

Among those who, for various reasons, gave their backing to President Putin's policy after September 11 were politicians who always and unconditionally supported the Kremlin. For example, how is one to assess the political somersault executed by the Chairman of the Liberal Democratic Party, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, who at the 13th convention of the LDPR in December 2001, repudiated his image as "a



fighter against the West” and declared that “it was necessary to develop political and military cooperation between “the civilized countries,” and first of all, between Russia and the United States?

Those who speak out against the deepening of Russia's relations with the West can be divided into several groups.

**First of all, there are those who pursue the sufficiently senseless quest for the answer to the question of whether Russia does or does not belong to Europe.** The debates that started back in the 19th century between Westernizers and Slavophiles are continuing to this day. It is the Russian communists that are in categorical opposition to the current foreign political course.<sup>18</sup> And to a certain degree, the centrist parties display a certain mistrust towards the West.<sup>19</sup> Their doubts about Russia's affiliation to Europe are based on the thesis that Russia is not a country of European culture. Paraphrasing the well-known saying that “what is good for the German is death to the Russian,” the opponents of a rapprochement with the West claim that Western institutions are unacceptable for Russia. It is possible to agree with this group in that, by absorbing other people's values and drawing upon other people's experience, Russia, as its history seems to confirm, will continue to follow its own road. Its advocates assert that is

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18. The Report to the Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation on June 22, 2002, “On the strategy of the CPRF in the electoral campaigns of 2003-2004,” differs very little from the Party documents of the CPSU. “To swiftly build up the polarization in the world, as well as the gap between the super-rich North and the poverty-stricken South... We have many allies in the world. China, India, and Southeast Asia are developing swiftly and strongly. The vast Muslim world is openly challenging the diktat of the U.S. Latin America is continuing to struggle.”

19. The program of the All-Russia political organization “Otechestvo” (Fatherland) declares that, “The hopes at the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s for Russia's speediest integration into the communities of civilized nations, united under the general concept of 'the West' on the basis of which the concept of 'a common European home' was based and the initiatives for disbanding military blocs proved to be illusory.”

the only thing that can ensure Russia's survival in the world. Without understanding and by failing to take Russia's uniqueness into account implies Russia may doom oneself into making new mistakes and errors concerning its relations with the West. However, without inculcating in Russia such Western institutions as democracy, freedom of speech, human rights, political parties operating in a free regime and so on, we shall hardly be able to build a normal democratic state.

**Second, the collapse of the USSR and the downfall of communist ideology gave rise to a new upsurge of discussions around the Eurasian idea.** In Russia today, the idea of special Eurasian “road” is especially popular among politicians and political analysts of various political vectors. The Eurasian motif can be seen in the programs of such parties as the CPRF (Communist Party of the Russian Federation), Regions of Russia, “Yedinstvo” (“Unity”), and “Fatherland - All Russia.” One of the ideologists of the new Eurasian concept, Alexander Dugin, is an adviser to Duma Speaker Gennady Seleznyov and one of the founders of the public political movement “Rossiya” (Russia). Eurasian ideas are also one of the main elements of the legal Muslim parties in Russia. In the summer of 2001, State Duma Deputy Abdul-Vahed Niyazov, who headed the regional list of “Unity” and was in the coordinating council of the bloc, created a Eurasian Party. In large measure, appeals to seek a special Eurasian way of Russia's development are reflected in the materials of Gleb Pavlovsky's Foundation for Effective Policies. The aspect uniting all of them is to seek and expose an Atlantic conspiracy against Russia, along with the need to unite the Europeans and Asians of Russia in the struggle against America's hegemony. If these ideas prevail, and Russia were to depart from the pursuance of a policy of rapprochement with the West, Eurasianism will almost most certainly become state policy.

The reasoning of those that advocate the country's development along the Eurasian route is based, first of all, on a messianic thesis about Russia's destiny in world history. Proceeding from the fact that the Russian people have such features as “conciliarism, kindness, sensitivity to other people's grief, a readiness to share the last with thy neighbor... adherence to the principles of Christian morals, the ideals of friendship,”<sup>20</sup> and since it lies in the center of the Eurasian continent, Russia must play the role of a consolidating force for the

peoples of the continent. Viewing Eurasia as a special geographical, social-historical, and social-cultural entity, the supporters of this idea presume, first of all, the reestablishment of ties among former Soviet republics within the CIS framework, secondly, the shoring up of the “Eastern” vector in Russian foreign policy, and thirdly, the construction of a society that in one way or another is based on the confrontational thesis of opposition between “the Eurasian community” and Western civilization.

It is possible to analyze the Eurasian concept both from the level of practical politics as well as from the point of view of trying to lay the groundwork for a global concept of Russia's development. If one speaks about the concept in general, then from our point of view its main shortcoming lies in the initially implanted idea of confrontation with the West, and the absolutization of the merits of Russia and the Russian people, which to a considerable degree, belittles those indisputable merits the concept has.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, while the Russian people have demonstrated their best qualities in the course of their history, nonetheless history offers ample examples of contrasts between heroism and collaborationism, stamina and submissiveness, religious adherence and atheism, and fidelity to idealism and betrayal in respect to the behavior of other people, including fellow Russians. Russians also do not have exclusive rights to the ideology of “consolidation in the world community, co-development and co-prosperity of all the nations and peoples inhabiting Russia.”<sup>22</sup>

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20. Quotation from: M. Titarenko, “New Eurasianism: the Asian Aspect,” *Russia-East-West* (Heritage, 1998), pp. 111-112.

21. As the Russian sociologist Irina Orlova writes, “Eurasianism today already has to encounter the onslaught of Western civilization, which proclaims various regions the sphere of its vital interests, having an impact on the adoption of important political and economic decisions, breaking down the spiritual basis of the Eurasian cultural-historical system: the multinational community, the peculiar value-normative priorities, peculiar value-norms in regards to mechanisms, priorities, national principles, national traditions.” I. Orlova, *The Eurasian Civilization* (Moscow: Norma, 1998), p. 123.

**It seems quite apparent that, without close interaction with the Western democratic community, it will be impossible to build a democratic state.** The institutional forms of such interaction may be diverse and alterable. Our entry into the Western community today depends on the shaping of a system for cooperation between Russia and NATO and between Russia and the EU on the political, economic, and military levels of interaction between Russia and the countries of the West. At the same time, as long as Russia does not realize it is part of Europe and, what is even more important, as long as Europe does not recognize Russia as such, it would be premature to speak about building a society based on principles of democracy and our entry into the community of Western countries.

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22. M. Titarenko, "The New Eurasia: the Asian Aspect," *Russia-East-West* (Nasledyie, 1998,) p. 110.



## A Union with the West or a Multi-vector Policy?

For the present Russia, the discussion about a choice between the West and East is seen as a kind of euphemism for those who have been criticizing the Westward orientation of Russia's foreign policy that has predominated during President Putin's term of office. In reality, it is quite apparent that a new Russia will not be able to exist in the contemporary world without overcoming the legacy of the Cold War together with the West and without developing and strengthening its relations with the countries on the periphery of its frontiers, many of which are closely connected with Moscow by many decades of common history. Russia has borders with China and Korea. Portions of its territory are not far from Japan and the United States. Russia also has traditionally strong ties with India. The process of gradually restoring political and economic relations with the countries of Central Asia is underway.

It is necessary to understand that Russia's Westward movement after September 11, 2001 should not be taken as a total reorientation of Russian foreign policy. Russia cannot exist without also preserving its interests in the East and the South. It is quite another thing that the development of relations with Europe and America is important for Russia, but also as an important factor for pulling the country out of the quagmire of the Cold War and entering the community of democratic countries, not only from the point of view of ensuring its economic interests and security.

The process of shaping full-fledged allied relations between Moscow and the West began after 9/11, on the crest of the rapprochement among the leaders of the antiterrorist coalition. However, the attempts to view Russia's relations with the West as those among allies are not very convincing. The regular demonstration of personal friendship with the leaders of the U.S. and Europe only creates the illusion of such an alliance, which is still a very long way off.

The transference from the so-far virtual partnership to real partnership is possible, as we see it, in the event of mutual observance of a number of principles of diplomatic practice:

- *Not to create problems where they can and must be avoided.*

Several times, President Putin has demonstrated his ability “to close his eyes” to situations that easily could have become serious irritants in Russian-American relations. Russia reacted calmly to the U.S. departure from the 1972 ABM Treaty, to the deployment of Western forces in Central Asia, and to American military advisers in Georgia. These moves did not precipitate a new round of confrontation between Russia and the West.

However, one must keep in mind that there is a limit to such tolerance, both in respect to the logic of such a development of any bilateral relations, as well as in respect to the internal political situation in Russia, where anti-Western sentiment uniting a considerable part of the opposition is still strong. Both Russia and the West understand full well that the establishment of good relations is mutually advantageous, yet there still remains mistrust that was generated by the long years of the Cold War.

In other words, in the first stage of seeking a formula for the transition from confrontation to good neighborliness or even an alliance, the demonstration of readiness for stable relations must be mutual. Moreover, it must take into account the specifics of the internal political situations in Russia and the West, as well as mutual understanding of the fundamentals of each other's perception.

- *It is necessary to jettison the persisting stereotype of enmity towards each other, and not to proceed from the assumption that the sole objective of the West is to ultimately destroy and humiliate Russia, and that Russia is dreaming of becoming powerful only because, in the future, it wants to repulse the West.*

Mutual suspicions shall remain as long as there is a possibility of returning to the Cold War. The only alternative to such a policy is a mutual and total repudiation of the possibility of returning to a confrontation. Unlike us Russians, the U.S. and Europe have long ago

come to the understanding that if it is possible, it is much more profitable to have good relationships with former adversaries than to continue the confrontation. America's relations with its former enemies in World War II, Japan and Germany, offer convincing confirmation of this thesis. The West could not have had long-term good relationships with the USSR in view of the insurmountable ideological confrontation between them. In Russian relations with the West today, this is possible only if we do not demonstrate a policy of restoring a Soviet empire that is also preparing for a new military confrontation with the West. The West, for its part, must regard us as an equitable partner and not try to make use of the asymmetry in economic potentials in its own favor.

Moreover, it would be folly to think that the West, while offering assistance in democratizing our country, will be doing that from altruistic convictions. The West is guided in this by purely pragmatic considerations. As soon as the U.S. and Europe come to the understanding that Russia will never return to a tough confrontation with the West and that Russia's missiles will no longer pose a threat to New York and London, there will appear a sincere desire on the West's part to develop the Russian economy and integrate Russia into the global world economic network. Nonetheless, while having stopped being the West's adversary, we still remain the West's competitor. In order to avoid new disappointments leading to new aggravations of relations, one should not overestimate the West's readiness to help Russia on a gratis basis.

- *Not to harbor illusions in respect to totally equitable and full-fledged participation of Russia in coalitions of the Western countries.*

It is necessary to proceed along the road toward Russia's integration into Western economic, political, and in the future, military structures. At present, though, we are only at the beginning of that not-so-simple and difficult process. We are cooperating in the fight against terrorism, and both sides are striving to underscore the unity of Russia and the West, but the still unfrozen ice of the Cold War remains. The disappointment of exaggerated expectations will lead only to the reproduction of confrontational sentiments.



At the same time, it is necessary to bear in mind that a Russian policy of developing relations with the West must not eclipse the need for a multi-vector policy. We cannot allow ourselves “to lock” exclusively on the West in our foreign policy because we shall deprive ourselves of the possibility of at least tactical political maneuvering between East and West. The question concerning the political or ideological orientation of Russian foreign policy does not today stand within the realm of choosing between them. It would be most rational to proceed in accordance with the country's strictly pragmatic interests.

From the political and economic points of view, our relations with the CIS members and China are no less, but even quite often more important for us. Nonetheless, one must remember that the advancement of these relationships to one degree or another became possible on the basis of realizing the value of precisely the Western principles of democracy and market economy. It is also necessary to bear in mind that, irrespective of the degree and scope by which Russia accepts Western or Eastern ideological and political values or lifestyle norms, it will always be a country remaining outside the conventional division of East and West. This is determined not so much by considerations dictated by the eternal Russian aspiration of placing itself in juxtaposition to the rest of the world, but rather by the peculiarities of our country's history and geography. It is necessary to value and make use of those advantages that our “intercontinental” and multi-nationality offer us.

Russia can survive and once again become “a great” country only if it accepts the democratic values that, whether we want it or not, have today obtained their highest development in the West. It is possible and necessary to agree with those who criticize Western civilization, since every living organism suffers from its own maladies. However, there is no need for Russia to blindly copy the institutions and structures of life in the West. Here, we are exclusively talking about the construction and functioning of a democratic society.<sup>23</sup> By accepting and implementing those institutions and structures into our day-to-day policy, we shall be taking a step towards our integration into the community of democratic countries.

Second, good relations with the West do not imply Russia's absorption in the West. Russia has been and will be a country different from the West. The West does not have a monopoly on democracy. However, the problem does not lie in the plane of which democracy is the oldest - Novgorod's or England's. The problem seems to lie in the following, as was so aptly remarked by Vladimir Putin in an interview with Polish journalists: "Liberties are plentiful; institutions of democracy are few." If we reject the currently existing institutions of democracy and continue to borrow them only from Novgorod, continue only to speak about the "assembly" or "council" of the Russian people, then we shall quite swiftly destroy all that has been accomplished in the past decade.

The movement towards the West is seen in essence as a process aimed at consolidating the reforms geared towards transforming our country into a democratic contemporary state with a market economy. At the same time, this movement has its limitations and barriers. In view of its history, geography and national self-identification, and even in spite of the mounting processes of internationalization and globalization, in the foreseeable future Russia will hardly become an integral part of the West. Russia today cannot fully become part of the Western political, economic and military community, both in view of its economic weakness, its still existing powerful nuclear potential, and also because neither the West, nor Russia itself, have confidence concerning Russia's ultimate choice in favor of a "pro-Western" course in its policy. Even when Russia regains its status as a state with a prospering economy and stable political situation, its entry into united Europe will be impeded by its might, dimensions, and influence in the world. Incidentally, when that happens, it is quite possible that such forms of

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23. In the national aspect, Japan remains an obvious example proving that, on the basis of the mutual borrowing of democratic principles, the construction of a state whose culture and political structure, in spite of the complicated processes of internationalization and globalization, is quite possible. Democracy was brought to Japan, if one paraphrases Alexander Herzen, on the tip of the bayonets of American occupation forces, but in spite of the fact that the commander of those forces, General Douglas Mac-Arthur, on his own initiative seriously prepared for Japan's "formal conversion to the Christian faith") (see, e.g., John W. Spanier, *The Truman-Mac-Arthur Controversy and the Korean War* (Cambridge, Mass., 1959), having invited missionaries from the U.S., Japan became a democratic, but not a Christian, country.

international relations as military-political and economic unions may well lose their timeliness and utility.

Besides everything else, Russia's total integration into the Western community, not counting the obvious cautious attitude of the West towards such a prospect, would entail a weakening of its statehood and sovereignty. In view of its history and national mentality, Russia will hardly be ready to accept the West European interpretation of the primacy of human rights above state authority, which obviously leads to a weakening of national sovereignty in favor of political and economic integration. Such manifestations of European politics as the international tribunal on crimes in Yugoslavia or prosecution of members in the peacemaking contingents by an international court do not arouse too much enthusiasm in Moscow, not to mention the fact that they are unacceptable to Washington.

## Conclusions

Today, our relations with the West as a whole and with the United States in particular have again entered the phase of a particular crisis. At the highest level, these relations seem to be quite all right, yet that they “seem to be” does not mean they “actually are” that way. Regrettably, meetings without neckties and at the fireplace, no matter how warm they may be, do not, by far, always reflect the real condition of interstate relations. For instance, unilateral actions by the U.S. and the UK in respect to Iraq not only lead to a new flare-up of terrorism, but also may undermine the coalition in the fight against terrorism. Together with many countries, Russia is continuing to call for political solutions of problems in situations when the possibilities for such solutions remain possible.

One should not close one's eyes to the fact that the United States itself has done quite a lot to sustain the negative stereotypes of bilateral relations. Having won the Cold War, the U.S. set before itself quite an understandable task—to remove, once and for all, the real military threat that had for more than 40 years determined the country's military-political guidelines. It was only at the declarative level that the Americans could believe, once and for all, in the total and instantaneous transformation of the communist “evil empire” into “a strategic partner.” The removal of that threat was also promoted by the fact that the 1990s became a period of America's unprecedented successful economic development.

At the same time, Russia suffered an extremely painful crisis without any kind of well-thought-out strategy for economic and political reforms. As a result, there appeared a yawning gap in the power potentials of the two countries, an apparent asymmetry in their positions in the new system of international relations. Washington either does not want or cannot understand the situation that has evolved around our bilateral relations. One gets the impression that the U.S. fails to realize that a serious aggravation of bilateral relations may lead to quite an unpredictable twist in the internal policy of Russia. Otherwise, how is it possible to explain its failure to repeal the still existing, notorious and obsolete Jackson-Vanik amendment?

If one assesses President Putin's approach to relations with the West, then it is possible to conclude that he has made his choice in favor of developing cooperation with democratic countries and is trying to pursue this line in spite of obvious opposition on the part of the Russian military and a considerable part of the political establishment. Reserving the right to have the last word in adopting political decisions, he is constantly "correcting" the stand of politicians, some of whom are in his closest circle. He can do that as long as he retains the confidence towards himself that is expressed in an ever-growing rating of his popularity in Russia.

Nonetheless, one must bear in mind that President Putin's policy in regard to integration with the West remains one of the most vulnerable items of his program. In order that this policy receive broader support from the political establishment and the electorate, it is necessary for him to demonstrate visible and tangible achievements that up till now practically do not exist. There is a firm conviction that the President is surrendering Russia's positions one after another without receiving absolutely anything in exchange.

At the professional politico-scientific level, it is possible to understand and explain that the dismantling and overcoming of "the ruins" of the Cold War represent a long and painful process that calls for mutual tolerance and patience. Unfortunately, such political processes are, by far, not always guided by rational considerations. If today the West fails to understand that Putin's policy can create serious prerequisites that could lift Russia-West relations to a qualitatively new political level, "the window of opportunities" may slam down, and it may take an indefinitely long time to wait for the opening of "a new window."

Russia today faces formidable tasks of great importance: to create a democratic society, to ensure human rights, to build a socially-oriented market economy, to raise the material well being of the population, to develop vast virgin territories, and to build constructive relations with the whole world. All these tasks are quite enough for the entire foreseeable historical future, and this is something that Russian society today has to realize full well by its own initiative.



